

### THE REASON WHY.

The train was late, even later than is usual on this particular line, and as they crawled through one station a weary traveller was heard to exclaim:

'What a villainous station this is! They try to irritate one on purpose. Look at those girls in the refreshment-room! Why do they dress them all in black?'

'Don't you know?' said a fellow-passenger, in a most solemn tone of voice, and with a look of awe on his face.

'No,' replied the curious and fretful traveller.

'Why,' said the other, 'because they are in mourning for the late trains.'

### A SMART VERGER.

Three tons of coal were delivered to a church in Kent, and on the bill was written:—

'One ton of coal at 35s., ditto, ditto.'

The verger, not understanding what 'ditto' meant, asked the vicar, who explained that, instead of putting 'one ton of coal' three times, they wrote 'ditto,' which was briefer, but meant the same.

The following Sunday the verger gave out 'Hymn No. 157,' and proceeded, as usual, to read aloud the first verse. These are the words which fell on the ears of the astonished congregation:

'Art thou weary, ditto languid, ditto sore distressed?'

### ALL THROUGH A PHOTOGRAPH.

The young matron stood sternly facing the man who had sworn to love and cherish her; anger, scorn, and indignation blazing in her eyes, her trembling fingers clutching a photograph—the photograph of a woman.

'So this, sir,' she cried at length, mastering with a supreme effort the womanly inclination to fall into a chair and scream herself into hysterics—'so this, sir, is the termination of our brief period of married existence; this is what I left a happy home, where I was the joy of dear mamma, for: this is all you mean by your hypocritical protestations of affection, which, if I hadn't happened to—to—er—to feel in your pocket to find a box of matches, I might have gone on blindly believing? This, I say, is all—'

'My darling,' he interrupted.

'Don't darling me, sir!' she cried, fiercely: 'don't dare to use a term of endearment to me again. I—I—oh, to think that you could be such a brute, such a monster, such a—'

'My pet,' he expostulated, 'pray hear me for a moment.'

'Not a word,' she broke in, furiously: 'not a syllable! Don't drive me to madness, I tell you! Don't add to your over-burdened conscience a string of miserable falsehoods, which can only make you, if possible, even more contemptible!'

'But really, Clara, if you will only allow me to explain—'

'Explain! What explanation can you give of the evidence of this photograph? Do I not find it secreted carefully in your own pocket? What construction would any sensible woman, any judge or jury, put upon such a discovery?'

'But, Clara, you are talking nonsense; the photo. is only—'

'Stop, sir!' she exclaimed. 'Have I not said that your excuses are futile? Oh, to think,' she added, passionately, her womanly spite for the moment getting the better of her dignity—to think that you could desert me for a thing like this! Look at her!' she cried, holding the photograph at arm's length and glancing at it in magnificent scorn, 'look at the brazen jade! Did ever you see such an object before? Why, the woman squints—actually squints; and then, what a nose, what a mouth—half across her face, I declare! And oh, her figure and the dowdy

frumpiness of her altogether!' She dashed down the photograph and sank breathlessly into a chair.

Then Henry got his chance. 'I've been trying to tell you, Clara, only you wouldn't allow me, that the photograph is only the one I took of you with my new camera last week. I did not think, myself, that it quite did you justice, but—'

But with a wild shriek she collapsed into unconsciousness.

### BIG BATTLE BLUFFS.

The secret evacuation of Suvla and Anzac by the English army of occupation under the very noses of the Turks—the biggest bluff in war's history,' as it has not inaptly been termed—bears a close resemblance to the similar abandonment of the Redan by the Russians during the Crimean War (says *Tit Bits*).

For months the heavy guns of the French and British had been pounding unavailingly at this exceedingly strong fortress. Twice they had tried to storm it, only to be repulsed with great slaughter. A third attack had been ordered to take place on September 18, but on the early morning of that date, before day-break, Corporal Ross, of the Royal British Engineers, who was in charge of one of the advanced saps, noticing that the place was strangely still, crept forward to investigate.

He found the works untenanted, save by dead men and a few badly wounded, and hastened back to report to the British commander, who at first was frankly incredulous. But investigation soon proved the truth of the plucky corporal's statements. The entire garrison had been quietly withdrawn under cover of darkness to the north forts, leaving the road to Sebastopol open.

Ross was awarded the Victoria Cross, and was known thenceforward throughout the British Army as 'Redan Ross.'

When the armies of Napoleon were overrunning Europe General Massena, with 18,000 men, appeared suddenly before the Austrian town of Feldkirch and demanded its surrender. Instead of complying, the burgomaster issued orders that the church-bells were to be set ringing, and that the burghers, their wives and daughters, clad in holiday attire, were to assemble in the market square and there make merry.

The result was exactly what he had hoped for. Massena heard the sounds of rejoicing, watched from the heights overlooking the town the gathering throngs in the streets, and came to the conclusion that the townsfolk must have received intelligence that the Austrian army, which was believed to be somewhere in the vicinity, was advancing to their relief.

As to give battle there and then formed no part of Napoleon's general plan of action, Massena ordered a retreat. Feldkirch was saved; and by a bluff, for as a matter of fact no relieving force was anywhere near at the time.

A bluff that was eminently successful resulted in the Earl of Peterborough securing possession of Barcelona in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The defences of the city were at that time exceedingly strong, Peterborough had with him barely 3000 indifferently-armed troops and two small cannon. Halting his force some miles away in the hills, he rode forward, attended only by a small escort bearing a flag of truce, and demanded an audience with the governor.

To him the Earl explained that he had been ordered to take the city by assault, but being wishful to avoid useless bloodshed he preferred to allow him to surrender it of his own free will.

Incredible though it may seem, this most colossal of bluffs 'came off.' The governor, after some parleying, agreed to accept the British general's alternative.

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